

# THE POLYNESIAN.

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J. J. JARVES, EDITOR.]

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## POETRY.

For the Polynesian.

### HEAVEN AND EARTH.

This world's not "all a fleeting show,  
"For man's illusion given";  
He that hath soothed a widow's woe,  
Or wiped an orphan's tear, doth know,  
There's something here of heaven.

And he that walks life's thorny way  
With feelings calm and even,—  
Whose path is lit from day to day,  
By virtue's bright and steady ray,  
Hath something felt of Heaven.

He that the Christian's course hath run,  
And all his foes forgiven,—  
Who measures out life's little span  
In love to God and love to man,  
On earth hath tasted heaven. \*.\*

### LEAVES FROM MEMORY'S NOTE BOOK. BY A CORRESPONDENT.

My dear Editor,—In accordance with your request I shall, from time to time, send you extracts from my Note Book. They will add to the variety of your subjects, and that is all the merit they can claim. In contributing my mite to fill your columns, I cordially join with other friends in wishing that your shadow may never be less.

Tahiti! the garden-isle of the Pacific; by poets sung, and by travelers praised, until thy wondrous beauty has become proverbial, as the summer skies of Italy, or the translucent atmosphere of the plains of Mexico. "I faith," and they were good judges that first called thee queen of the southern ocean. Land, though it be but a rock, or patch of sand, or sterile earth, affording foot-hold only to the fowls of the air, has a glad some appearance to the wearied voyager. But with what marvellous beauty does Tahiti break upon the view, as the ship, rapidly sailing before a strong breeze, is borne towards her shores. The mountains rising to an elevation of seven thousand feet, unshadowed by a single cloud, stand out in bold relief, from the transparent sky. Verdure clothes their summits, and covers even the beach, with but an occasional strip of sand, which sparkling in the bright sun-light, contrasts prettily with the dark green of the surrounding foliage. The hills present the usual variety of ravine, dell, cascade and mountain stream, so familiar to all who rove amid the inter-tropical scenery of the Pacific. But the peculiar charm of this island, is its astonishing fertility, which leaves scarcely a barren spot, to relieve the exuberance of her vegetation. The reef which encircles the island, affords numerous and safe harbors. It seems as if it were designedly placed around it, to protect so perfect a gem, from the rude assaults of the unscrupulous water-god. A most efficient barrier it is too; a short distance from the shore, the surf roars and rolls and foams in tremendous sheets over the coral wall; but by the time its billows reach the strand, its motion is as gentle as a lover's first and stolen embrace. Orange and other fruit trees intrude their very roots into the briny element; neatly white-washed cottages are embowered beneath their shade; canoes are shooting hither and thither, children sporting; in short the whole panorama as seen from the ship's deck, appears like an abode of ease and innocence. But like all pictures when seen in their best light, it disappoints upon a closer examination.

The harbor of Papeite, in Matavai Bay, is formed by the reef which encircles the whole island. Within, it is spacious, much more so than that of Honolulu, to which it is also superior, in having two entrances; one at either extremity. The western is the most used, being widest and deepest; the eastern

is narrow and somewhat intricate. A diminutive island, on which is a grove of trees and a few guns, dignified by the term of fort, is situated about midway between those outlets. The reef grows within a short distance of the surface of the water. In sailing over it in a small boat, the eye looks down upon its bed, as upon a brilliant paterre. Corals, and corallines, shells, crustacea, madripores, echini, asteria, and fishes of all the infinite variety of shapes, hues, and sizes, which nature so lavishly bestows in the sunniest regions, are here to be seen. Not apparently strewn in rude confusion, but planted as it were, by the great Architect of the earth, in those positions, which from their symmetry and harmony in shapes and colors, afford the highest gratification to the human eye. Powerless would be the art that should attempt to fashion and paint such as these. And they lie within reach of the arm. The most delicate specimen can be selected from the boat; but when transferred from their native element to the open air, their brilliancy fades, and that which under water was as delicately beautiful as the rays of a cloudless sunset, becomes not unfrequently misshapen and disgusting.

So too, to a great extent, is the town of Papeiti, if the collection of huts which line the beach, is worthy of the term. They are greatly shaded by the trees, which in fact form a forest even to the water. There are a few wooden houses of somewhat better appearance than the rest; such as those of the English missionaries, the consuls, and the few merchants who here do business. But the generality of even these content themselves with very inferior habitations, when compared with those of Honolulu. Indeed there is as much difference between the appearances of the two places, and the relative civilization of each, as between a town of New-England, and one of Barbary. The huts of the islanders are built of cane; open at the sides for a free circulation of air, and thatched only on the roofs. A screen of tapa or mats protects the dwellers from the weather. The floors are mostly of mother earth, damp and cold. On that account they pay more attention to making rude bedsteads and seats than the Hawaiians, but the best of their houses which I saw, would not compare, in neatness or comfort, with the generality of those of the latter. It was evident, however, that improvements were making even here. Papeiti boasts a good hotel, with its usual appurtenances of bowling alleys, and a billiard-room. Business is rapidly increasing, owing mainly to its having become a very general resort for whalers for these few years past. The chief trade is with Sydney. Sugar, but in small quantity, is the chief export. But no criterion of the capabilities of the soil can be formed from its present productiveness. Notwithstanding all the benevolent labors which have been expended upon the Tahitians, it must be confessed, that as a body, they continue corrupt and indolent. Without sufficient energy to develop the limitless riches of their native soil, and too ignorant and jealous to permit foreigners to undertake agricultural enterprises of any magnitude. Consequently, business here is narrowed to a petty traffic, and circumstances, as yet, have not been sufficiently encouraging to attract thither, many individuals of capital, and knowledge, sufficient to test the capacities of the island. The number of foreigners, mostly Englishmen, is however very considerable; too many are outcasts from Sydney, who have obtained a footing here, to the serious detriment of the best interests of the place. These have been followed however by others of more respectability, and a number of English ladies are now residing there.

But the town itself is wretched. It lines the beach for a mile or more, another row of huts running back of and parallel with the front. The most conspicuous objects are the groggeries, droves of hogs and piles of filth. Numerous streams, and those not of the most limpid hue, intersect the town; the soil is rich, and when it rains, exceedingly muddy. Women in a state of nudity, are even to be seen, lying in the dirty streams, playing in the water, and not unfrequently cracking their vulgar jokes with white seamen, who are engaged in filling water casks from the foul stream in which they all promiscuously bathe and wash. Such is the force of habit, that it passes for nothing here. With such a spectacle before him, none need complain if the swine follow their example, first wallowing in the greasy black earth, then laving their bodies in the scarcely cleaner stream.

The Tahitian men are very well formed, large and of lighter complexion than the Hawaiians. But they continue to wear to a great extent their national costume, a piece of gay cloth wrapt around the loins, after the manner of the Hawaiian *kihci*, or petticoat. This gives them a strangely effeminate appearance. The women are fair; some indeed may be termed beautiful; clear olive complexions, and smooth, well formed, and rotund limbs. They dress better than the men, and are much addicted to finery. No small spice of coquetry is in their dispositions, and they are as gay as ever. But there are a few exceptions; matrons who appear staid and respectable; these pay good attention to their families and the duties of religion. On Sunday, the whole population appear in colors and dresses, as brilliant and variegated as the flowers of their forests. Of the latter, a species of japonica, white, and of the richest perfume, the women use to a great extent in ornamenting their hair. This they do with much taste, and the fragrance that attends these simple wreaths, makes their wearers welcome visitors.

The present queen is one of the finest looking women of the island. Time and troubles have reformed her, and she is now much respected. Her husband was evidently selected for his beauty. They have one child, who is heir to the throne. Very little refinement was observable among the chiefs; they neither live or dress as those of Hawaii. In native intellect they may be upon a par, but either from want of advantages, or other unfortunate circumstances, in advancement from their original barbarism, they are far behind them. But the Queen is a kind soul. She called upon us immediately upon our arrival; questioned our lady passengers closely upon the fashions, and took one of them upon her knee, as if she had been a mere child, which in fact she was, in size, when compared with her Tahitian Majesty. At church she appeared with her husband, dressed in the extreme of fashion; lost indeed in the profusion of French millinery which enveloped her royal person. In the afternoon we returned her call. She lives in the rear of the town, in a wooden house built for her by foreign mechanics. It seems our visit was somewhat inopportune. She, with her royal spouse, were stretched out in hammocks, under the portico; they had left to themselves the smallest quantity of clothing, and all their finery, from stockings to corsets, were hung upon lines in front of the house. Upon espying us, the servants scrambled in with these articles, and the royal pair hurried after them and speedily reappeared in more suitable costume.

Yrs., WANDERING TIM.

'Hell hath no fury like a woman (s) CORNED, is the new reading.

## SELECTED.

### DUELLING.

It is to be regretted that the spirit of duelling should exist in any community. As a relic of the past, it should have ceased with the close of those ages in which it originated. The laws of God and man alike condemn it:—opposed to reason, and repugnant to humanity, it puts the offender in opposition to the emphatic declaration of Divinity,—"vengeance is mine, I will repay."

The cases that have occurred in our town, within the year past, have been confined to youth, and the results not fatal. The ripened judgment of manhood, even when principle is not opposed, is slow to seek redress for real or fancied wrong, in the blood of fellow man, especially where laws exist to give equity alike to all. The impetuous blood of youth delights in exposing itself to danger, for causes often frivolous in the extreme, and the results upon person or character are, amid temporary excitement, shrouded from view by the deceitful eclat with which a false public opinion, too often invests the duel. Still, while the temptation thus to terminate grievances continues, and cases arise of a nature so aggravated that law cannot give redress, and human nature retains its hot flow of angry blood, we despair of its becoming altogether obsolete. It has lost, however, much of its sway over civilians, and there are not a few now, who possess the higher courage that dares proclaim itself fearful to offend against the injunction, "thou shalt not kill." We believe it to be lessening, even among military men. Where it does exist, governments, though unable effectually to extinguish it, endeavor to lessen its frequency, and regulate it by appropriate laws; and it admits of argument, whether the practice in certain conditions of life, is not conducive to good order and the preservation of harmony. Men become more guarded in their conversation and manners, when it is known that a failure in respect due from one gentleman to another, or an attack on a weaker or defenceless party, subjects the offender to the risks of mortal combat. It has been aptly termed "a good police regulation," and the result of its judicious exercise in producing heightened self-respect, and restraining the undue license of conversation which is so common among certain classes of civilians, may be beneficial, in the main, to society: but, as in many other cases of human affairs, it is merely the substitution of one evil for another, the choice being the least. The following is from a late paper,—

"COURTS OF HONOR.—An ordonnance has been issued by the King of Prussia for the establishment of Courts of Honor, for the prevention of duelling and for the adjustment of such questions between officers or other gentlemen as have been considered as coming under the cognizance of the code of Honor. By the laws of Prussia, killing in a duel is regarded as murder and punishable with death. Quite recently in the case of a duel at Cologne, between a Lieut. Von Pelzer, and a Mr. Hein, the latter being killed, Von Pelzer was tried and sentenced to suffer death, and his second, who was a Lieutenant in the same regiment, was condemned to hard labor in a fortress for ten years. The second of Hein had not been discovered. The sentence against Von Pelzer had not been executed at the last accounts, and it was confidently expected that the King would commute it. A letter from Berlin, published in a London journal, gives the following account of the principles on which these Courts are based:—

"The ordonnance on this matter is dated, says the letter, July 20, and contains 37 articles, from which it appears that courts of Honor are to be permanent in all garrisons, the members being named by the King. All officers of the army, with the exception of general officers, are subject to the jurisdic-